

The Sacred College of Cardinals

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I. THE ADVISERS OF THE EARLY POPES.—Although the Bishop of Rome, the Visible Head of the Church, when speaking from the Chair of Peter as the Supreme Teacher of revealed truth, is safeguarded, according to the divine promise, from all error in what concerns faith and morals, this does not hinder him nor much less, excuse him from availing himself of those natural and ordinary helps which prudence may suggest. From the earliest ages, therefore, we see that the Popes were wont to call together the clergy of Rome for consultation on weighty matters of faith, discipline and Church affairs in general. This assemblage was known as the *presbyterium*, or presbytery. Prelates who chanced to be in Rome were commonly invited to attend the presbytery and to take part in its deliberations. Thus Pope St. Cornelius, writing in 251 to St. Cyprian, says that he had assembled a presbytery and that five visiting bishops had taken part in it.

II. ROMAN COUNCILS.—Many of the Popes, including St. Damascus, Felix III, and St. Cornelius himself, held councils which, from their nature, were neither provincial nor plenary nor general nor ecumenical, but in a class by themselves and simply Roman; for they were attended by all bishops that could conveniently reach the city. Most of the prelates, therefore, were from Italy and the neighboring countries. Some of these councils were very numerous attended. One held under Pope St. Agatho in 680 brought together 125 bishops, and another under Pope St. Sylvester in 325 saw 275 prelates gathered around him. These councils, nevertheless, could not be held with great frequency, for the difficulties of communication and travel were too great to be overcome, and hence the Pope's main dependence for advice and help was the presbytery.

III. THE "TITLES."—When the surcease of persecution permitted the free multiplication of churches, a means of distinguishing one edifice from another was found by giving to each the name of some saint, and this name was called the "title" of the church. Parish

churches, where holy baptism was administered, were the first to receive this distinguishing mark. By the sixth century there were in Rome twenty-five parish churches, each with its own title. Soon the two terms, parish and title, became interchangeable, so that if an ecclesiastic was called, for example, the priest of the title of St. Chrysogonus, it signified that he was the parish priest of the Church of St. Chrysogonus. Soon, also, arose the practise of raising men to the priesthood for service in some particular church, which thus came to be called their "title" (or church) of ordination.

Here is seen the origin of the expression used nowadays to indicate the different reasons for raising a young man to the priesthood. If he simply wishes to be a priest for his own consolation and spiritual good, and intends to live on the income from his own property, he is ordained under the title of patrimony. If, as is often the case in countries long Catholic, a sum has been put out at interest for the maintenance of a priest, a seminarian may secure the appointment, if there is a vacancy, in which case his title of ordination is a benefice. In religious orders and congregations the candidate for major orders is ordained under the title of poverty, to which he is bound by vow. Pious associations of secular priests may have a "common table" as their title. In the United States the diocesan clergy are ordained under the title of "service of the Church," that is, for work in the diocese. The bishop undertakes to secure their proper maintenance, of which they will not be deprived except for grave shortcomings. Here, as in all things human, mistakes have been made and unmerited hardships have sometimes been imposed. The object of the "title" is quite manifestly so to provide for the maintenance of the clergy that they may never be compelled by untoward events to seek a livelihood in ways not becoming their state of dedication to God's service.

IV. INCARDINATION AND CARDINALS.—But, back to the early ages. By the bond which attached the priest to a certain church or "title" he was said to be "hinged upon" that church, and to it he looked for decent sustenance. The particular church itself was called his "hinge" (in Latin, *cardo*), and hence the priest was

styled "*cardinalis*," because of his connection with that church or *cardo*. Several of these "*cardinales*" might be attached to one church, as a parish priest may now have one or more assistants. In the fifth century, for example, we find in the same documents the signatures of three priests "of the title of St. Clement."

In our time and country some dioceses are well supplied with priests, while others are in great want. It often happens, therefore, that a bishop will permit some of his priests to go to toil for several years in the vineyard of a needy colleague in the episcopate, or he may even allow them to sever their connection with the diocese and join the other. In this case they are "incardinated" in the new diocese. Our English word is of respectable antiquity, for Pope John VIII, writing on October 28, 876, to the bishops of the ecclesiastical province of Bourges, in France, told them that he has "incardinated" Frotarius in the church of Bourges. The Pope's meaning was that he had made Frotarius Archbishop of Bourges by attaching him to the *cardo* or church of Bourges.

V. CARDINAL DEACONS AND CARDINAL BISHOPS.—It was in 240 that Pope St. Fabian appointed a deacon for each of the seven districts of the city. The duties connected with the office were to look after the needy and the suffering and to take charge of a little oratory or chapel, where the faithful could gather for their devotions. From such humble beginning sprang the seven deaconries which, after Constantine gave peace to the Church, though they were not parish churches, received distinctive names. As the deacons were also attached to some church, they, too, were known as "*cardinales*" of that church, because incardinated in it.

Near enough to Rome to make the journey comparatively easy there were seven towns, each the seat of a bishop. These seven prelates, consequently, were often summoned to advise with the Pope and his presbytery when matters of moment were to be discussed. This practise having continued after the Pope had his episcopal chair in the basilica of St. John Lateran, the prelates of the seven suburban sees were considered as attached in a special manner to the Pope's cathedral, and were there-

fore called "cardinales" of the Lateran church. The expression is found in documents of the pontificate of Pope Stephen III (768-772). By a decree of Pope Calixtus II, in 1119, two of these suburban dioceses were permanently under one bishop. Thus there were, first, Cardinal Priests, then Cardinal Deacons, and finally, Cardinal Bishops. The earliest known use of the word cardinal in a signature is appended to a letter of Pope John XIII to Landulph, Bishop of Benevento, bearing the date of May 26, 969; but twenty-four years later, a Bull of Pope John XV has attached to it the signatures of nine "Cardinal Priests." From that time on the examples multiply rapidly. The present usage is founded on a Constitution of Pope Sixtus V, who ordained in 1587 that cardinals in signing apostolic documents should invariably express their cardinalitial title or deaconry or diocese.

VI. CARDINALS IN FRANCE, SPAIN AND GERMANY.—The name of cardinal was looked upon as an honorable designation, as we see by the action of Pope St. Leo IX, who, in 1081, granted to the cathedral of Besancon in France the privilege of having in its chapter seven cardinals, who were permitted to wear the mitre in church ceremonies on the great feasts. A similar privilege was granted by Pope Eugene III to the cathedral of Cologne in 1152. Again, Pope Innocent III confirmed in 1209, in favor of the bishop and chapter of Crense, Spain, a custom which they had had "from time immemorial" of naming eight cardinal priests of their cathedral church. The shrine of St. James at Compostela in Galicia also had seven cardinal priests, through a favor granted in perpetuity by Pope Paschal II in 1108. Although Pope St. Pius V ordained in 1568 that the name cardinal should be reserved exclusively to the cardinals of the churches of the city of Rome, his decree remained in abeyance as far as the two churches in Spain were concerned, for they did not drop the title from their lists of dignitaries until the adoption of the Concordat of 1851.

VII. PAPAL ELECTIONS.—When an election to the see of Rome meant a life of suffering and persecution, very often crowned with martyrdom, there was little likelihood that an unworthy candidate should present himself or find encouragement. The clergy chose him, the

neighboring bishops confirmed their choice, and the faithful in general were present to testify to his worthiness. Thus in the first century, a Syrian, St. Evaristus, in the second an African, St. Victor I, and the third a Dalmatian, St. Caius, sat in the Chair of Peter. But when the Papacy, released from the persecutions of pagan Rome, began to take its proper place in the world, all the resources of worldly power and craft were drawn upon from time to time to exalt now this candidate, now that, as politics or family pretensions or brute force might dictate. Some robber baron at Rome forced his candidate upon the people, or some German emperor named the occupant of the see.

Pope Stephen X, a saintly and devoted Benedictine monk, seeing that his end was approaching, used his best endeavors to impress upon clergy and people the vital importance of the election of a proper successor. All promised to heed his advice, but hardly was his death known when, in spite of bishops and cardinals, some Roman nobles, by means of bands of armed ruffians and of money stolen from St. Peter's Church, set up John of Velletri as Bishop of Rome. Their triumph, however, was short-lived; for some of the cardinals who had escaped from the city met in Siena and decided that Gerard, a Burgundian, then Bishop of Florence, would be a suitable Pope. Their action was confirmed by the clergy and the people of the city, and Gerard, who took the name of Nicholas II, was solemnly enthroned. John of Velletri quietly acquiesced.

Shortly after his exaltation, Pope Nicholas II held a council, in which he signalized his brief pontificate by attempting to do away with the evils which had sprung up in connection with papal elections. With the advice of the bishops and other clergy assembled for the occasion, he issued a decree, dated April 13, 1059, by which he reserved to the cardinal bishops the actual election to the apostolic chair, with the concurrence, however, of the other cardinals, and of the rest of the clergy. As a concession to the Emperor, he was to be notified of the election before the consecration of the candidate. Unhappily, the decree was not respected. For fully 120 years after the death of Nicholas II it was seldom that a papal elec-

tion was conducted without more or less interference on the part of violent or arbitrary laymen.

When Alexander III ascended the throne of the Fisherman, in 1159, it was to begin a long and stormy pontificate; but, after a struggle of twenty-two years with clerical mischief-makers and lay meddlers, he saw his labors gloriously crowned in the work of the Eleventh Ecumenical Council, held in the Lateran basilica in 1179. What Pope Nicholas II had attempted to do Pope Alexander III accomplished by a conciliar enactment, which at once and for all time reserved exclusively to all the Roman Cardinals, without distinction of order, all future elections to the see at Rome. The decree also ordained that the votes of two-thirds of the Cardinals actually assembled for the election should be requisite to determine a choice. Such has been the practise since 1179. The choice of Pope Martin V in 1417 by an electoral commission made up of twenty-eight Cardinals and forty other ecclesiastics, it may be remarked in passing, was to meet a highly exceptional state of affairs brought on by a disputed and, at the time, doubtful election, which had precipitated the disastrous Schism of the West.

Besides the conciliar enactment, Pope Alexander III took other prudential steps to protect and dignify the election of those who were to come after him in the Popedom. The abbots of St. Paul and St. Lawrence without the walls were made cardinals; the archpriests of the Lateran, of St. Peter's and of St. Mary Major were similarly honored; and all the most influential and most respected priests of Rome were admitted to membership in the College of Cardinals. The inferior clergy, consequently, and the people in general, seeing their honored friends and patrons thus singled out for dignities, were quite satisfied to leave to them the choice of a Bishop of Rome.

As pontifical electors, the cardinals have commonly chosen one of their own numbers, and the blank ballot which they fill out supposed that they will select a cardinal. but any man that is a bishop, or may become a bishop, is eligible. The history of the Church shows that Pope Eugene III and Pope Urban VI, among others, were not Cardinals when elected, and that Pope John XX was not even in minor orders when called to the Chair of Peter.

The Cardinal Bishops are, of course, bishops, as are almost always the Cardinal Priests residing outside Rome. Nowadays even the Cardinal Deacons are usually priests, there having been but one exception these many years: But, going back a few centuries (and they are as nothing in the life of the Church), we find that Pope Honorius II and Pope Leo X, though cardinals, were only in deacon's orders when elected to the pontificate. The election of Pope Gregory XVI in 1831 is the only instance in these latter days of the choice of one who was not already a bishop.

VIII. ELECTION CAPITULATIONS.—As far as the cardinals were concerned, 115 years passed by before there was a successful attempt to tamper with the Lateran decree on Papal Elections. During that time three Frenchmen and a Portuguese were among those who reached the throne of Peter. As in all periods of the life of the Church, there had been days of joy and days of mourning; for the human element is always present in men and simply awaits a suitable occasion to shake off a lethargy which is more apparent than real, and to battle with the weapons of the flesh against the cause of the spirit. The electors of the Bishop of Rome had come to the conclusion that they ought to have even more influence in Church affairs. The question was how to acquire this. When they assembled for an election in 1204 it struck some of them that if they were to draw up an agreement, an election capitulation they called it, the one among them who should be chosen would thus be bound beforehand to the course of action contained in the agreement. The first attempt of the cardinals to apply the unworthy methods of worldly politics to papal elections was a failure. So was the second; likewise the third; also the fourth. Eventually, the scheme was condemned by Pope Innocent XII, who branded it as an unwarranted infringement of the liberty of the Head of the Church.

IX. THE VETO.—During the past 260 years three countries, Austria, Spain and France, have claimed and repeatedly exercised the power to object efficaciously against the candidacy of some one cardinal when the Sacred College is in conclave for a papal election. This power is known as the veto or exclusion.

In practise, the veto was communicated to the cardinals by a cardinal specially accredited by the sovereign and supported, if necessary, by the sovereign's ambassador near the Holy See. Even in the heyday of its Erastian glory the power could be exercised but once by each nation, and against but one candidate at an election. However, it was urged and acted upon as a principle that the candidate once excluded was excluded forever; hence, in every conclave each of the three nations could exclude a new candidate. Thus, Cardinal Sacchetti, who had been excluded by Spain in 1644, was, in virtue of that exclusion, declared ineligible in 1655.

It has happened, however, when it was unofficially known a certain candidate was to be excluded, that the Sacred College has petitioned to the Government to withdraw its veto, and has obtained its request. It was known, for example, that France intended to exclude Cardinal Chigi in 1655; but, at the request of the Sacred College, the opposition was withdrawn and he was elected Pope Alexander VII.

Although the veto, as understood and exercised in modern times, dates only from 1644, traces of it are found at a much earlier date. As an illustration, some cardinals would confidentially agree to dissuade the electors from making a certain choice; or they would so openly, yet unofficially, oppose some candidate that their intention was made known to all the electors. This plan was tried in 1549, and again in 1555, when Cardinal Caraffa became Paul IV despite the opposition of the cardinals partial to Charles V. Again, a sovereign's wish to exclude a cardinal would be officially declared to the whole Sacred College, without, however, pretending to exercise a strictly effective right to veto his election. Pope Leo XI was elected in 1605 against the express wishes of Spain.

Since 1644, however, the efficacious power of excluding from the Popedom has been arrogated to themselves by the Governments of Austria, Spain and France. If the matter were not so intimately connected with the good of religion, one might be tempted to laugh at the arguments upon which each country found its fictitious prerogative. Austria was the heir, in this point, of the old German emperors, the advocates and protectors of the

Church; France claimed the power as coming down from the days of Charlemagne; and Spain inherited it from her king who was Charles V of Germany. The truth seems to have been that the three countries, being the three great Catholic nations of the period, thought they had a good reason for interfering with papal elections; and the cardinals tolerated their meddling for fear of the evils that might otherwise come upon the Church.

During the past hundred years Austria excluded Cardinal Severoli in 1823, and Cardinal de Gregorio in 1829; Spain excluded Cardinal Giustiniani in 1831, and in the same conclave France excluded Cardinal Macchi. In 1846 Austria had directed Cardinal Gaysruck to veto the election of Cardinal Mastai-Ferretti; but before his Eminence reached Rome the election was over and the subject of the veto was Pope Pius IX. The veto pronounced by Cardinal Puzyna in the name of Austria against Cardinal Rampolla del Tindaro in 1903, it was said at the time, was requested by Italy as a member of the Triple Alliance.

Under date of January 20, 1904, Pope Pius X signed the Constitution, *Commissum Nobis*. He ordered it to be read to all the cardinals at their first meeting after the demise of the Roman Pontiff, to be read again to them when they gather in conclave to elect his successor, and to be read to each cardinal at his creation, when he shall swear to observe it.

The paragraph which most concerns us is as follows:

Wherefore, in virtue of holy obedience, under threat of the judgment of God, and under penalty of the greater excommunication, without further declaration and specially reserved to the future Pope, we prohibit the cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, each and all, both present and future, and also the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Cardinals and all other persons taking part in the conclave, from accepting under any pretext from any civil power the charge of proposing the veto or exclusion, even as a simple wish; or from making known to the assembled Sacred College of Cardinals or to the cardinals singly, either in writing or by word of mouth, either directly and personally or indirectly and through others, a veto or exclusion that may have in any way come to their knowledge.

The veto belongs to past history.

X. CARDINALS OF THE HOLY ROMAN

CHURCH.—With the German, French and Spanish exceptions already noted and no longer in existence, all cardinals have been connected with some church in Rome. This has been true ever since the ecclesiastical use of the word became fixed and settled. Even the Cardinal Bishops of the suburban sees have a special bond with Rome, and, while remaining Ordinaries properly so called, live in Rome and have the assistance of auxiliary bishops, who perform episcopal functions in the six dioceses. The cardinals, therefore, wherever they reside, constitute the chief clergy of the Pope's own diocese of Rome; they are Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church. For the past 325 years their number has seldom equaled and never exceeded seventy, though, besides the six suburban dioceses and titles for fifty-four Cardinal Priests, there are fifteen deaconries, thus making seventy-five cardinals now possible without any change in churches or titles.

Though all cardinals have been and are connected with the churches in Rome, all have by no means been Romans, for the Popes have summoned to their assistance learned and able men from all parts of Christendom. The persuasion long prevailed that an ecclesiastic raised to the cardinalate ought to take up his residence in Rome, where he could be of immediate assistance to the Pope in his management of Church affairs, and therefore if he were a residential bishop far from Rome he ought to resign his see. Pope Clement III, we believe, was the first to establish a different practise, for he is said to have raised William, Archbishop of Rheims, to the dignity of Cardinal Priest. A few years later, namely in 1201, Pope Innocent III made Anselm, Archbishop of Naples, Cardinal Priest of the title of SS. Nereus and Achilleus; and the same Pontiff consecrated the Cardinal Priest Stephen Langton and sent him to England as Archbishop of Canterbury. The only recent example of a priest and not a bishop raised to the Cardinalate and yet excused from residence in Rome is seen in the case of Cardinal John Henry Newman, whose age at the time of his elevation was an all-sufficient reason, even if others were wanting. Pope Leo XIII honored him for the services which he had already rendered to the cause of religion, nor for his prospective services as a resident of Rome, where his

recognized ability might indeed have made him singularly helpful.

The first Englishman to be admitted to the Sacred College was Cardinal Ulric, who was thus honored by Pope Paschal II in 1107. Passing over William Dardlaw, Bishop of Glasgow, who was named in 1381 by Clement VII of the Avignon line, shortly after the outbreak of the Western Schism, Cardinal Beaton, who was created by Pope Paul III in 1538, was the first Scotch cardinal. What may well cause some surprise is the fact that the first native of Ireland to receive the red hat was Cardinal Cullen, who took his place in the Senate of the Church in 1867.

XI. PREEMINENCE OF THE CARDINALS.—

Many years passed after the existence and recognition of the three orders of cardinals before they rose to their present position in the Church; for at a council held in Rome under Pope Benedict VIII in 1015, the Cardinal Bishops signed after the Archbishops and the senior Bishops, and the cardinals without the episcopal character signed after the Bishops. Indeed, before we meet with an authenticated case of a cardinal not a bishop outranking a bishop we must pass on to 1312, when Pope Clement V dispatched Arnold, Cardinal Priest of St. Prisca, and another Arnold, Bishop of Poitiers, as his legates to England. As a matter of fact, it was because the cardinals as such discharged legatine functions, coupled with their office of pontifical electors and counselors, that they were placed above other churchmen and next to the Pope. This point was definitely settled by Pope Eugene IV in 1438.

XII. THE NUMBER OF CARDINALS.—

The number of cardinals has varied greatly at different periods of the Church's history. When we read that Pope St. Pontian (230-35) had "two hundred and thirty-six cardinals," we are to remember that the word is there used in its old and obsolete sense of simple priests attached to Roman churches or living in actual dependence upon the Pope.

At the election of Pope Nicholas III, in 1277, there were but eight cardinals, the smallest number, as far as we know, that ever constituted an electoral college for the

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choice of a Pope. On the other hand, the number of cardinals under Pope Pius IV rose to seventy-six. Only twice since 1586, when Pope Sixtus V fixed the whole number at seventy, has the death of a Pope left so many in the Sacred College. This quite extraordinary occurrence took place in 1655 and again in 1667.

One of the favorite schemes of the Election Capitulations was to try to bind the prospective Pope as to the number of the cardinals that he should create or as to the circumstances in which he should create them, many cardinals and other prelates being satisfied that twenty or twenty-four were sufficient. Even the Emperor Ferdinand I petitioned the Council of Trent to limit the number to twelve, or at most, twenty-four. In fact it happened that for almost a hundred years in succession that this latter number has hardly been reached, not to say exceeded, and such was the case while the Popes resided at Avignon.

It is manifestly within the competency of the Pope to create cardinals when and where he will, nor can one Pope effectually limit successors to any fixed number. Much less, then, have existing cardinals a decisive vote as to who or how many shall thus be honored. At times, however, when their opinion has been asked, the more heady among them have emphatically protested against certain accessions to their number, as some did in the time of Pope Calixtus III.

Some Popes have passed from this world in so short a time after the assumption of their office that they have created no cardinals; while others, like Alexander IV, who reigned for seven years, have not exercised this right. The largest single creation of cardinals took place during the pontificate of Pope Leo X, when he raised thirty-one to membership in the Sacred College. Among those he then created were the Generals of three religious Orders, namely, the Dominicans, the Franciscans, and the Augustinians. Another was a Hollander, Adrian of Utrecht, a man of saintly zeal and austerity, who afterwards became Pope Adrian VI. Still another was Alfonso of Portugal, a youth of seventeen. During his pontificate of eight years, Leo X created forty-two cardinals, of whom thirty-four were Italians. Another famous creation was that

of Pope Benedict XIV in 1743, when twenty-seven were raised to the purple.

XIII. WHO MAY BECOME A CARDINAL?—As far as right is concerned, we may say at the outset that no post in the Church necessarily carries with it a valid claim to the red hat. There are, however, certain offices in Rome where incumbents are so looked upon as on the way to the Cardinalitial dignity that the withholding of it would be tantamount to a strong papal condemnation. Further, a good understanding with Catholic Governments (or, rather, with Governments in Catholic countries) prompts the Pope to grant the purple to certain prelates in those countries. Such prelates are then called "Crown Cardinals." Not every Crown Cardinal has always served God as faithfully as he has served his king. Moreover, the Pope may take it upon himself to raise some prelate to a place in the Sacred College and in doing so he may pass over patriarchs and primates and archbishops, and select a bishop of an unimportant see. The matter rests with the Pope, who, however, cannot possibly have a personal knowledge of all, or even many, of the deserving churchmen who would add lustre to the Senate of the Church.

The cardinalate is usually conferred in recognition of distinguished personal services or qualities. In former times, when the Church was less free than today, petty princes and lords who chanced to be in a position to help or hurt religion very considerably sometimes used their power to extort the cardinalitial dignity for some of their kin or hangers-on. Thus, through family influence, Giovanni de'Medici became a cardinal before he was quite thirteen years and three months old. Still earlier in life the child had been made commendatory abbot and protonotary apostolic. Even some of the Popes could not, or did not, withstand the temptation to exalt their family by giving it unwarranted representation in the Sacred College, as seems to have been the case of Sixtus IV, who placed red hats on five of his nephews, one being a stripling of seventeen, another a great scoundrel, and a third almost a saint. A cardinal must belong to the clergy, though he need not always receive major orders. Here we may recall Cardinal Caesar Borgia, who received but minor

orders, and it was a positive misfortune that he received even them. He afterward retired from the Sacred College and resigned all his ecclesiastical offices, but not soon enough.

When Pope Pius II was elected, in 1458, the conclave numbered eighteen cardinals, of whom ten were foreigners, and of the twenty-seven who elected his successor, Paul II, fourteen were foreigners; but in 1471, when Sixtus IV was chosen, of the eighteen cardinals in the conclave all but three were Italians. From that day until very recent foreigners have been of slight numerical importance in the Sacred College. Since the death of Pope Adrian VI, in 1523, all the Popes have been Italians, yet no Roman has been chosen since the Dominican Pope Benedict XIII in 1724.

It has been remarked that, theoretically speaking, the Pope is perfectly free to promote whom he will to the cardinalate. No particular formula or ceremony is essential, the one thing necessary being that he shall make known his mind to the cardinals, for they must know who belong to the Church's Senate and who do not. When the Pope confers the dignity but withholds for the time the recipient's name, he is said to reserve him *in petto*, literally, in his breast; that is, there exist prudential reasons for not making the name known when the honor is actually conferred. Should the name not be published by the Pope before leaving this world, it is as if there had been no nomination. Thus, Pope Pius IX created some Cardinals *in petto* and left their names in his will, but they were not recognized as members of the Sacred College. On the other hand, Pope Clement XIV, who had been unfairly prevailed upon to create eleven cardinals and reserve them *in petto*, was importuned on his deathbed to proclaim them, but he steadfastly refused to the end. The eleven fell short of being cardinals, because their dying Pontiff already looking into eternity would not declare their names.

The cardinalitial dignity is not an order, but an office. Once ordained to the priesthood, one necessarily remains a priest forever, and, though silenced and degraded and excommunicated, could in some contingencies, exercise certain priestly functions; but a cardinal may be so utterly

separated from his office that he simply ceases to be a cardinal and retain nothing but the memory of his former rank. Though the Popes have very rarely used such extreme measures, both Julius II and Leo X may be mentioned as having exercised that power.

XIV. WHAT THE CARDINALS DO.—So old is the practise of directing a committee of cardinals to inquire into and determine what is to be done in some certain matter that it is quite impossible to say who constituted the first committee or with what subject it was concerned. Those appointments were, however, temporary; the committee was dissolved when the question was settled. Such was the first step towards relieving the Pope of some of the labor connected with frequent Consistories.

The most ancient of the existing Sacred Congregations is that of the Holy Office, which dates from Pope Paul III, who, in a Constitution dated July 23, 1542, called it into being as a permanent feature in the administrations of the affairs of the Church. Next is to be placed the Sacred Congregation of the Council, which Pope Pius IV established on August 2, 1564, to examine questions on the Holy Council of Trent which might reach Rome for settlement. The third is the Sacred Congregation of the Index, which was established by Pope St. Pius V, though the precise date cannot be determined. It examines books of doubtful orthodoxy or questionable morality, and may forbid their use to Catholics. Such a step is not taken, however, unless it appears from the circumstances that the book may do very general and widespread harm. The fourth Sacred Congregation is that of Bishops, and owes its origin to Pope Gregory XIII, or, at least, it was already in existence in his time.

The preceding four Sacred Congregations, then, were the only stable commissions of cardinals when that wonderful man, that alert and far-seeing Pontiff, Sixtus V, ascended the throne. He reorganized the whole administration of the Church and remodeled or created fifteen Sacred Congregations for systematizing and expediting the ecclesiastical business that through one channel or another came to the Eternal City. From 1586 to 1924 is a long stretch of time, yet the work of Sixtus V was so

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separated from his office that he simply ceases to be a cardinal and retain nothing but the memory of his former rank. Though the Popes have very rarely used such extreme measures, both Julius II and Leo X may be mentioned as having exercised that power.

XIV. WHAT THE CARDINALS DO.—So old is the practise of directing a committee of cardinals to inquire into and determine what is to be done in some certain matter that it is quite impossible to say who constituted the first committee or with what subject it was concerned. Those appointments were, however, temporary; the committee was dissolved when the question was settled. Such was the first step towards relieving the Pope of some of the labor connected with frequent Consistories.

The most ancient of the existing Sacred Congregations is that of the Holy Office, which dates from Pope Paul III, who, in a Constitution dated July 23, 1542, called it into being as a permanent feature in the administrations of the affairs of the Church. Next is to be placed the Sacred Congregation of the Council, which Pope Pius IV established on August 2, 1564, to examine questions on the Holy Council of Trent which might reach Rome for settlement. The third is the Sacred Congregation of the Index, which was established by Pope St. Pius V, though the precise date cannot be determined. It examines books of doubtful orthodoxy or questionable morality, and may forbid their use to Catholics. Such a step is not taken, however, unless it appears from the circumstances that the book may do very general and widespread harm. The fourth Sacred Congregation is that of Bishops, and owes its origin to Pope Gregory XIII, or, at least, it was already in existence in his time.

The preceding four Sacred Congregations, then, were the only stable commissions of cardinals when that wonderful man, that alert and far-seeing Pontiff, Sixtus V, ascended the throne. He reorganized the whole administration of the Church and remodeled or created fifteen Sacred Congregations for systematizing and expediting the ecclesiastical business that through one channel or another came to the Eternal City. From 1586 to 1924 is a long stretch of time, yet the work of Sixtus V was so

well done that it remained substantially the same for over three hundred years.

The Sacred Congregations as constituted in 1908 by His Holiness, Pope Pius X, are eleven in number. To these are to be added in virtue of the same Constitution three Tribunals and five Offices, five of the eight being in charge of cardinals. Every cardinal belongs to one or more of the Sacred Congregations.

Although much that might prove of interest might be said of each of these nineteen commissions, with their various duties and responsibilities, let it suffice to speak of the first of the Tribunals in order of dignity, that is, the Sacred Penitentiary. To this Tribunal belong various matters of conscience, such as absolution from some very grave and heinous sins, and dispensations and sanations, in which the greatest secrecy must be observed. The earliest appointment of a cardinal to the charge of this Tribunal, as far as we know, was that of Cardinal John of St. Paul, who was created Cardinal of St. Prisca by Pope Celestine III in 1192. By repeated Papal and conciliar enactments, beginning with the Council of Vienne in 1311, the functions of the Cardinal Penitentiary are not affected by the demise of the Supreme Pontiff, for weighty matters of conscience could hardly await a new election. The Cardinal Penitentiary may be said to take the Pope's place in receiving confidential communications on matters of conscience and in absolving from sin and censures.

There are in Rome three churches in which the Cardinal Penitentiary appears in state, holding his wand of office in his hand. On Palm Sunday he goes to the Pope's Cathedral, namely, St. John Lateran, where, having seated himself, he rests his wand, "the rod of penance," on the heads of the pious faithful as they approach and kneel before him. On Spy Wednesday he visits the church of St. Mary Major for the same purpose, and on the two following days of Holy Week he sits in St. Peter's church. The ceremony is a survival of the practise of admitting sinners to public penance.

Among the Cardinal Penitentiary's other duties are those of distributing the blessed ashes on Ash Wednesday to the Pope and the cardinals and other dignitaries who may be present, of officiating solemnly on All Souls

in the papal chapel, and of assisting the Pope on his deathbed.

XV. THE CONSISTORY.—When all the cardinals in Rome are summoned to meet under the presidency of the Pope, the assembly is called a Consistory. The Roman councils of which we have spoken could not meet with great frequency, for the reasons already indicated. They were never held as often as once a year, and there were at times intervals of ten years between successive councils. The Consistory, on the contrary, can be held as often as His Holiness sees fit. We read of Pope St. Leo IV, for example, that he held Consistories twice a week, and some of his successors assembled the cardinals even oftener. As the suburban Bishops already formed a part of the Sacred College, it will be noticed that a Consistory bore more than a faint resemblance to the Roman councils of earlier times. By reason of the work now distributed among the various Sacred Congregations, Consistories have of late years become almost a rarity.

Now and then, in the course of the year, the cardinals are summoned to a secret Consistory, at which the Pope delivers a formal address, or allocution, as it is always styled, creates cardinals, grants the sacred Pallium to patriarchs and archbishops, and names bishops. Only the Pope and the cardinals are present. The secret Consistory is regularly held in the papal palace, but there have been instances in which it was held in the palace of some cardinal whose advice was considered very important, yet whose illness prevented him from going to the usual place of meeting.

The red hat is conferred in a public Consistory, to which prelates of all ranks and secular dignitaries are admitted. Ambassadors to the Holy See also appear at a public Consistory to present their credentials.

XVI. THE CARDINALITIAL INSIGNIA.—The distinctive robes and insignia of the cardinalitial dignity are of no great antiquity. Pope Innocent IV, who died in 1254, gave the red hat, which was then actually worn as a head-covering and was much less ornate than the one which now had only a ceremonial use. Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) gave the "sacred purple," or cardinal red robes. Cardinals, however, from religious Orders

having a distinctive habit retain in their robes the color of their habit. Thus, Cardinal Martinelli, once delegate to the United States, being an Augustinian, dressed in black. Pope Gregory XVI belonged to the Camaldolese monks, whose habit is white. The color of his robes, therefore, was the same, as monk, as cardinal, and as Pope. Since Jesuits have no distinctive habit, a Jesuit cardinal's garb is like that of a secular cardinal.

In 1464 Pope Paul II permitted or confirmed the use of the mitre, and granted the red biretta, or cap, to cardinals who were not members of religious Orders. Pope Gregory XIV, in 1591, extended the privilege to all cardinals, with the proviso that the biretta of the religious should be of wool, and not of silk. The address of "Eminence" dates from Pope Urban VIII in 1630. Finally, Pope Pius X decreed in 1905 that all cardinals could wear the pectoral cross, even in the presence of the Sovereign Pontiff. The date at which they began to wear a ring as a part of their distinctive insignia cannot be accurately determined. As far back as 1294 we find the granting of the ring spoken of as "customary" when the cardinal received his title. The ring, which is set with a sapphire, because it marks the wearer as an ecclesiastical prince, is worn continuously, except on Good Friday. The fee which is paid when the ring is received is set aside for some pious use. At times it has gone towards the maintenance of the Pope's cathedral, the church of St. John Lateran; when St. Ignatius of Loyola was establishing the German College in Rome, it received all such fees for several years; the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith is now and has long been the beneficiary.

At no time in the history of the Church has the cardinalial dignity been more generally or more highly esteemed. This is not simply, nor, we venture to say, chiefly, on account of the prerogatives attached to it, but, rather, because of the spirit which animated the Popes in their creation of cardinals, and of the learning, ability and personal worth of those whom they have freely singled out for membership in the Senate of the Church.

"The Cardinals of Manhattan"

THE whole country rejoices in the honor which Pope Pius XI has conferred upon it in calling two American citizens, the Archbishops of New York and Chicago, to the Sacred College of Cardinals. As Archbishop Hayes truly said, the selection made by his Holiness evinces the Holy Father's love for our country and his sincere interest in its truest welfare. Hence the choice of the Vicar of Christ is a genuine token of his regard for all our people.

But Catholics in the city of New York will be pardoned if they so far indulge their pleasure as to claim that the choice reflects especial honor upon their beloved and much-maligned mother-city. For Archbishop Hayes and Archbishop Mundelein, both natives of Manhattan, may be truly ranked as "the Cardinals of Manhattan." Both prelates are products of our parish schools; more, each is an alumnus of a venerable institution which bears the ancient name of the city. Hence if the city and the country are to be congratulated, a special meed of honor must be reserved for the Christian Brothers of New York, for it was at Manhattan College that the young men now raised to a sublime dignity, received that Catholic training so earnestly desired by the Church for all her children. Many are the Catholic colleges which humbly thank Almighty God for sons and daughters who are battling nobly in the cause of truth and righteousness at the altar, in the cloister, and in the world. But is there a college in Christendom which can boast that two of its children, Metropolitans in great and populous Provinces, were called to the Sacred College on the same day?

Like Dartmouth a century ago, Manhattan is "a small college," but, again like Dartmouth, "there are those who love it," and who heartily rejoice with this Kindly Mother in the honor which the Vicar of Christ has conferred upon her sons. Perhaps it is a departure from the glad spirit of the occasion to observe that there are some who belittle the worth to the country of the Catholic college. Sensible men find the answer, if answer be needed, in the scholarly, public-spirited Archbishops of New York and Chicago, "the Cardinals of Manhattan," sons of a city and college of ancient and honored name.

American Cardinals

UNDER the title "American Cardinals" are included not only those who were born in the United States, but those also who labored in this country. The names of those Cardinals who were casual visitors here are omitted from the list:

John Cardinal Cheverus	Diomedes Cardinal Falconio
John Cardinal McCloskey	John Cardinal Farley
James Cardinal Gibbons	William Cardinal O'Connell
Francis Cardinal Satolli	Denis Cardinal Dougherty
Aloysius Cardinal Mazzella	John Cardinal Bonzano
Sebastian Cardinal Martinelli	George Cardinal Mundelein
Donatus Cardinal Sbarretti	Patrick Cardinal Hayes